THE ELEVENTH DAY.

Friday, the 9th March 1928.

The Assembly met again at 11·45 A. M. on Friday, the 9th March 1928. The Dewan was in the chair.

182. Public service.

MR. V. R. GOPALA PILLAI (*Member, Kunnathunad taluk, Group I*) raised a point of order at the outset of his representation. According to the rules in force, said he, the Dewan alone was competent to preside over the Assembly. If the Dewan could not be present, there were only two courses open. One was to adjourn the Assembly, and the other was to appoint a substitute under Royal Command, with all the powers of the Dewan for the purpose of the Assembly. But the previous day an officer had presided over the Assembly in the place of the Dewan, without an official announcement of his appointment or of his investiture with the powers of the Dewan. The member had therefore his own apprehension whether the proceedings of the Assembly on the previous day were validly conducted.

Dealing with the subject of his representation, the member spoke first on recruitments to the public service. He suggested that the appointment of foreigners should be discontinued. There were too many foreigners now in the service. In fact almost all the important appointments were in their hands. His next point was that the age-limit for entrance into the public service should be raised to thirty. Young men who had completed their education had generally to wait for two or three years to get a job, by which time they would in all likelihood have passed the age of twenty-five, and then they would, for no fault of theirs, become ineligible for appointment. Special considerations should also apply in the case of the backward classes. Their young men could not be expected to be on a par with those of the more advanced communities. It was to obviate these hardships that the age-limit had to be raised. The member also said that appointments should not be made on the basis of communal representation. By recognising this basis, Government were helping the development of communal feuds. The spirit of communalism was already rife in the land. Indeed in the rural areas people knew little of it. There they lived happy, undisturbed lives. In the matter of promotions, Government had no definite policy. The member next pleaded that magistrates should be appointed from the bar. Another suggestion he made was that judicial and executive functions should be separated. The pay of magistrates should also be raised, and the appointments of magistrates and munsiffs should be made interchangeable.

DEWAN'S RELPY: Mr. Gopala Pillai, in regard to your first statement you may possibly be aware that this Assembly is not a statutory body. It is summoned at the instance of the Ruler and the Dewan presides, or rather the Dewan receives the representations of the body, as the person duly authorised therefor by the Ruler. In the event of the Dewan's unavoidable absence, it is not fair to the Assembly that its proceedings should come to a standstill or that business should be hung up Equally it is a matter of great inconvenience to the members if adjournments should take place from day to day. I can conceive the position that members have to go back to their homes or places of business ; I can conceive the tremendous inconvenience members will be put to in finding places of residence here. It is necessary therefore that the business of the Assembly be conducted with promptitude. All these are weighty considerations which render it advisable that, because one man is indisposed, the work of the Assembly should not be abrogated. If the Dewan can be duly authorised by the Ruler to receive the representations of members, equally so can any other officer, in the absence of the Dewan, be duly authorised to receive the representations. And I can assure you that yesterday, the officer who presided and received the representations was duly authorised so to do by the Ruler.

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You make communal representation a peg upon which to hang the foreigner. I suggest, before you make a general statement to the effect that the service is over-run by foreigners, that you collect statistics which are contained in published statements, and see what is the percentage of appointments held by foreigners. There are occasions, happily rare, when special considerations and efficiency demand that a foreigner should occupy a place of authority as an officer of the State. I do not think there are many who will share with your view that every foreigner, whether doing good work or bad work or work of exceptional merit, should be expunged from the State. In many cases we have to be thankful that we have been able to secure the services of officers doing work for the State which the people of the State appreciate.

You then talk of the age-limit. This age-limit was proposed for good and sufficient reason. To my mind there must be something radically wrong when a man fails to qualify himself to earn a livelihood before he is twenty-five. Of course, there are as you say, backward classes who have been hindered in the matter of education and who have not acquired their qualifying degrees before this age. Government always show consideration in such cases and it is entirely wrong to say that applications for exemption from age-limit are sanctioned as a matter of course.

You turn to communal representation and you say that communalism is rife in the State although in the same breath you admit that in the rural tracts there is absolutely no communal strife. Let me assure you that the communal feeling that you describe is slowly dying out in the State and it is hardly perceptible at present. But a speech such as this will only increase it. You have to consider whether in making such an appeal to the communal spirit, you are doing your country a service or a disservice.

There are no other points in your representation that call for a special reply rom me.

183. Needs of the Meenachil taluk.

MR. VARKI KOCHOUSEPH (*Member, Meenachil taluk, Group I*) described the absence of facile means of communication in the Meenachil taluk and made the following proposals for improving the condition of the taluk :—

(1) Government should take over for maintenance the ryots' road from the Erattupettah-Kanjirappalli road (near the 7th mile-stone) to the K. K. road, 33rd mile.

(2) A road should be opened from the Kanjirapalli-Erattupetta road, 10th mile, to the Edamattam-Tidanad road.

(3) The Ampara-Mankompu road and the Antinad-Melukavu road should be made fit for cart-traffic.

(4) The Erattupetta-Arakulam village road should be converted into a public road.

(5) The Plasanal-Pravithanam road should be constructed at once.

(6) The survey of the Ettumanur-Mundakayam railway line should be made before the close of the year and its construction should be taken up immediately after the opening of the Quilon-Ernakulam railway line.

(7) A bridge should be constructed at Erattupetta.

(8) The construction of the proposed bridge across the Kadanad canal should be put in hand at once.

(9) Government should take over the maintenance of all ryots' roads about which representations had been made at the previous session of the Assembly.

(10) A District Court should be established at Meenachil with jurisdiction over the Munsiffs' Courts at Meenachil, Kanjirapalli and Todupuzha. This could be done by reducing one of the benches in the Kottayam District Court.

(11) A Sub-Registrar's Office should be established at Erattupetta or, if that was not possible, the Sub-Registrar's Office at Bharananganam should be transferred to Erattupetta.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Varki Kochouseph, the first item of your representation is regarding the assumption by the P. W. D. of the ryots' road from the Erattupetta-Kanjirapalli road, 7th mile, to the K. K. road, 32nd mile. No application

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